<u>AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:</u>

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

<u>LISTING OF CLAIMS:</u>

1.   (Currently Amended) A uniform interface for configuring and managing a plurality of different types of network devices, comprising:

a library containing generic commands that can be applied to said network devices; and

a plurality of plug-in modules that can register with said library, each of said modules operating to convert at least some of said generic commands into device-specific commands and ~~providing~~ <u>transmit</u> said device-specific commands to <u>remote</u> individual devices of a type that are associated with the module.

2.   (Original) The system of claim 1 wherein said plug-in modules transmit each of said commands in accordance with a transmission protocol specific to the individual devices, respectively.

3.   (Original) The system of claim 2 wherein one of said transmission protocols comprises Telnet.

4.   (Original) The system of claim 1 wherein one of said generic commands establishes a connection to a network device through which configuration commands can be sent and information can be retrieved.

5.   (Original) The system of claim 1 wherein one of said generic commands retrieves the current configuration of a network device by executing appropriate commands on the device.

6.   (Original) The system of claim 1 wherein one of said generic commands post-processes configuration information retrieved from a device to render said information suitable for storage and saves it to a local file system.

7.   (Original) The system of claim 1 wherein one of said generic commands puts a device into a mode where it can accept configuration commands through an established connection at an enabled level.

8.   (Original) The system of claim 1 wherein one of said generic commands gives a device a complete configuration based on information from a stored configuration file.

9.   (Original) The system of claim 1 wherein one of said generic commands puts a device into its most privileged level through an established connection to the device.

10.   (Original) The system of claim 1 wherein said library is responsive to the receipt of a command for a given device to determine the module that corresponds to said device and provide the received command to said module.

11.   (Original) The system of claim 1 wherein said modules convert responses received from the individual devices with which they are associated into a generic format for presentation to said library.

12.   (Currently Amended) A method for configuring and managing a plurality of different types of network devices, comprising:

establishing a library of generic commands that can be applied to said network devices;

registering a plurality of plug-in modules with said library, each of said modules operating to convert at least some of said generic commands into device-specific commands;

receiving commands for a given device that is remote from said modules;

determining the module that corresponds to said device and forwarding the received commands to said module; and

~~providing~~ transmitting said device-specific commands from said module to said given device.

13.   (Original) The method of claim 12 wherein said plug-in modules transmit each of said commands in accordance with a transmission protocol specific to the individual devices, respectively.

14.   (Original) The method of claim 13 wherein one of said transmission protocols comprises Telnet.

15.   (Original) The system of claim 12 wherein one of said generic commands establishes a connection to a network device through which configuration commands can be sent and information can be retrieved.

16.   (Original) The system of claim 12 wherein one of said generic commands retrieves the current configuration of a network device by executing appropriate commands on the device.

17.   (Original) The method of claim 12 wherein one of said generic commands post-processes configuration information retrieved from a device to render said information suitable for storage and saves it to a local file system.

18.   (Original) The method of claim 12 wherein one of said generic commands puts a device into a mode where it can accept configuration commands through an established connection at an enabled level.

19.   (Original) The method of claim 12 wherein one of said generic commands gives a device a complete configuration based on information from a stored configuration file.

20.   (Original) The method of claim 12 wherein one of said generic commands puts a device into its most privileged level through an established connection to the device.

21.   (Original) The method of claim 12 wherein said modules convert responses received from the individual devices with which they are associated into a generic format for presentation to said library.

22.   (New) The method of claim 12 wherein said network devices are selected from the group consisting of switches, firewalls, routers and load balancers.

23.   (New) The system of claim 1 wherein said network devices are selected from the group consisting of switches, firewalls, routers and load balancers.